



Edition Eighteen

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Although care has been taken in preparing the information contained in this document, accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation or the Teachers' Bargaining Unit, District 18.

We invite comments, questions and submissions from members. Please feel free to contact us at:

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A Positive Political Connection Is Maintained

By Mac Howson

The teachers and educational workers of Upper Grand District 18 will be well represented and their issues and concerns can be heard in the government thanks to the results of the recent election. Candidates from across the province, as well as locally were helped in their election with support from OSSTF. Our participation with and support of these candidates has been noted.

Within Upper Grand for example, John Wilkinson (Perth-Wellington, geographically including both Norwell D.S.S. and Wellington Heights S.S.) said that he is pleased to be part of the new cabinet as Minister of Research and Innovation and that it is an honor to know that the premier has that much confidence in him. Also, in his acceptance speech on election night, he specifically thanked OSSTF members for their assistance throughout the campaign. As well, Liz Sandals in Guelph, who will continue to be the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, publicly thanked the small army of OSSTF volunteers. She confirmed that your "support

made it possible to mount our successful re election campaign". She appreciated all of the work. Specifically mentioned were pamphlet drops and putting up and maintaining signs. She said that this is "Absolutely essential work in a successful campaign."

I will continue to maintain a positive relationship specifically with these two MPPs in order to keep our educational issues among the provincial priorities. When you identify issues locally, let us know so that your CPAC (Communications and Political Action Committee) committee can stay current and informed.

Now that the dust has settled from the recent provincial election and the hectic pace of starting a new school year, we can settle back into some form of normalcy or whatever 'normal' is for you.

Thanks so much for your participation in this recent election.

The OSSTF support was appreciated.

Semester Passing By Quickly

Paul Rawlinson

TBU-Chief Negotiator/Treasurer

As first report cards and Commencement Ceremonies pass by you may have already realized that there is only slightly more than a month left until Christmas Day. As we count down the days to the holidays hopefully the information below may help the count down go more quickly and smoothly!

Retirement Gratuity-RRSP

Contributions for eligible contract teachers will be divided over the last 3 pay periods of the year beginning November 27 and ending on December 24 so watch your pay stubs for an additional amounts being added to your gross pay. Despite another recent appeal to Revenue Canada contributions will still appear as income and income tax will be deducted from the three final pays resulting in lower net pay amounts. Remember these funds return to members when they file their income tax return and claim the RRSP contribution back early in 2008. Please see your branch CBC Rep for information regarding plan eligibility or contact me at the District Office.

ALP/TPAs

Changes to the Teacher Performance Appraisal process and the Annual Learning Plans completed by teachers each year have undergone some recent changes. "Teacher authored and teacher directed" learning plans have had changes made to the document that teachers must complete. Branch representatives will have received details at the TBU Training Workshop held the weekend of November 9-10th and will be able to update members on both these issues. The changes that were introduced by the Ministry of Education, are largely endorsed by OSSTF Provincial Office however, we expect some review of the issues during collective bargaining in 2008.

Attendance Management Policy

Early last year the Board proposed a new policy creating a form of Attendance Management to come into effect for all Board employees. Despite objections from the bargaining units we understand that the Board is preparing to pilot the program in select schools. We have outlined the opposition of the TBU to the Board throughout the consultation process which the Board concluded unilaterally in September. The Federation will continue to voice its concerns over this demoralizing policy while working closely with the branch personnel in the schools that pilot the program. While the Board sees the program as a means to identify employees who may need support dealing with issues that impact their attendance at work the Federation remains skeptical.

Members Survey for Negotiations

The CBC Committee is pleased to notify members that our survey to identify priorities for negotiations in 2008 will be finalized shortly. The Committee hopes to administer the survey to all TBU members the last week of November or the first week of December. The results will help to shape our brief for negotiations and will also be forwarded to Provincial Office for use by the Provincial CBC Committee. Already Mac Howson -TBU President and I have attended a CBC Regional Conference in London in October and a Special Meeting in Toronto last week to co-ordinate with other districts and the Provincial Executive as the groundwork for negotiations in 2008 is put in place.

I would ask that all teachers with any contract time (TBU members) complete and return a survey when your CBC Rep distributes them!

Successful Branch Representative Conference

By Clare Richards.

On November 9th and 10th, twenty five members attended a TBU Branch Representative Training Workshop at the Holiday Inn in Guelph. The goal of the conference was to advise and train Branch Reps on issues such as dealing with member to member conflicts, helping a member who is being bullied or harassed, and representing a member in crisis. This type of information allows Branch Reps to better assist members in their work sites and to answer their questions.

Representatives from all of the eleven TBU branches had a chance to meet, socialize, and get answers to some frequently asked questions. TBU President, Mac Howson, and TBU Chief Negotiator and Grievance Officer, Paul Rawlinson, each presented workshops during the conference. Our Provincial Liaison, Norm Uhrig, did an excellent job providing training and answering many questions for our Branch Reps. Thanks to all those who

participated to making the conference a huge success. If you would like to see some photos from the event, please check the District 18 OSSTF website.



Retirement Planning Workshop

There are still a few spots open for the Retirement Planning / Pension Workshop being held at the District 18 office in Fergus on Monday, November 26 at 5:30. Ruth Kirkham, from the Provincial office will present for about 1 ½ hours on the practical steps needed to prepare for your retirement. This popular annual workshop includes light refreshments and a practical guidebook. Call Darlene, the secretary at the office to reserve your spot. 519 843 4043. Also, if you are thinking of retiring this year, pick up a Retirement package from your Branch President or call the office and we'll send you one. Following some of the steps outlined in this package may save you money and

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will help you through this

transition.
Contribute to
the newsletter.

Submit articles,
letters, poems,

ideas for

contests, etc.

This is an

opportunity to

share your
thoughts and

opinions with
teachers across
the District.

WORKING CONDITION SURVEY

A survey about Working Conditions is
being circulated out of OISE, sponsored
by E.T.F.O. The title of the survey is

"Teacher Working Conditions The

Matter?" Do not participate in this

survey. All surveys dealing with
working conditions are the purview of
the Collective Bargaining Committee
and OSSF.

Certification Changes

Many certification rating
applications have been
forwarded as a result of the
changes made at AMPA in
March 2007. Because of the
large volume of requests,
Provincial Office is just now
beginning to process
applications made in August.
Refer to further changes in
the recent "Update" if you
are still considering applying
for a rating change.

HEALTH AND DENTAL BENEFITS

Contact OTIP for Member Benefit
Inquiries at 1-866-783-6847 or
www.otipservices.com

You can view this newsletter on our District
Website. Go to www.d18osstf.com



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